

Date: March 6, 2012

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Theodore L. Voorhees, Deputy City Manager
From: Jim Soukup, Director of City/County Emergency Communications
Tonya Pearce, D.E.C.C. Assistant Director
Subject: Implementation of Emergency Fire and Police Dispatch Protocols

Executive Summary

Protocol based call processing is considered to be an industry best practice for 9-1-1 Centers. Protocols are available for EMS, Fire and Police. Durham Emergency Communications Center currently utilizes and holds accreditation in the use of Emergency Medical Dispatch protocols. Legislation pertaining to the use of Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Funds (H1691, Section 9) provides a temporary opportunity to use a portion of surcharge funds for the payment of overtime associated with certifying Communication Officers in the use of Fire and Police protocols. Implementation of Emergency Fire and Emergency Police Dispatch protocols affords the opportunity to enhance the department's ability to assist in providing safe and secure neighborhoods with no impact to the general fund.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council (i) authorize the City Manager to execute an Addendum to the contract dated March 19, 2003 with Medical Priority Consultants, Inc. (doing business as Priority Dispatch) to allow the purchase and implementation of Emergency Fire and Emergency Police Dispatch protocols in the amount of \$232,096.01, without competitive bidding as authorized by G.S. 143-129 (e)(6) on the grounds that the products are available from only one source of supply and (ii) payment of future associated maintenance costs from the Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Fund; and that payment of overtime associated with certification of Communications Officers in the use of Emergency Fire and Emergency Police Dispatch protocols be authorized as necessary, provided the amount does not exceed \$80,000.00 payable from the Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Fund.

Background

Durham Emergency Communications Center has utilized Emergency Medical Dispatch protocols since 2006. This method of call processing requires all questions to callers be asked following a formatted script. Following the scripted protocol assures that all callers reporting medical emergencies receive the same level of service and that all responders received the information gathered in a consistent manner. Protocol based call processing provides a viable basis for effective quality

assurance of our call taking process. Durham Emergency Communications Center was recognized as an Emergency Medical Dispatch Accredited Center of Excellence in 2008. Implementation of Emergency Fire and Emergency Police Dispatch protocols will allow Durham Emergency Communications Center to achieve the same benefits for callers and responders when fire and police calls for service are received.

Issues/Analysis

Legislated temporary expanded use of Emergency Telephone Fund Surcharge affords the City the opportunity to cover overtime costs for certification that would normally be ineligible and would have to be paid from the general fund. Implementation of Emergency Fire and Emergency Police Dispatch protocols has been a goal of Durham Emergency Communications Center for several years. All costs associated with implementation other than overtime are eligible expenditures from the Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Fund. Due to the 24 hour, seven days per week operation of the 9-1-1 Center, certification requires scheduled overtime. The payment of the required overtime from the general fund has proven to be cost prohibitive. In order to meet the eligibility requirements for the temporary expanded use of surcharge funds we must complete implementation prior to 2012 fiscal year end.

Alternatives

Implementation could be delayed until a future date. Doing so would require that all overtime costs be taken from the general fund.

Financial Impact

The cost of the purchase and implementation of Emergency Fire and Emergency Police Dispatch protocols is eligible from the Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Fund. Until 2012 fiscal year end the cost of overtime hours required for Communication Officers to be certified in use of these protocols is also eligible from the Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Fund. There is no impact to the General Fund. Priority Dispatch is a sole source provider for these protocols and a letter is attached attesting to this.

SDBE Summary

This is a sole-source purchase. It was not reviewed by the Department of Equal Opportunity/Equity Assurance for compliance with the Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracting.